

"No enemies save of your own making," were the words that rose to his lips, but he could not taunt a creature so prostrate, so bankrupt of all that makes life worth living.

"Would you like your stepdaughter to call?"

"No—no—no—a thousand times no—I want neither her nor Dick! I want no canting superior creatures to pity me in my low estate. I do not want to see you either unless it is necessary. After all, you do not oppress me as the others do. Remember, it is what religious idiots call the judgment of heaven, not the strength or cleverness of others, that has beaten me down—go—I do not want you."

The experienced reader can want but little more detail. He, or more probably *she*, will anticipate that the comfortable well-appointed house in Falkland Terrace has been broken up, and the doubly-widowed Acland and his children removed to a suburban villa a few miles out of town, where their name was as little known as if they had come from the other side of the Atlantic. The once admirable Mrs. Acland was supposed to have gone to some health resort, and the family vanished from the ken of society in the north-west district. That Marjory presided over the unhomelike home until the children went to school—that Uncle and Aunt Carteret finding it necessary to visit London the following year, celebrated the modest wedding of their favourite niece in the house they had hired—that Lord Beaulieu was Dick's best man—that his young widowed sister put on gray and graced the occasion—that Philip Cranston was the kindest and most cheery of inmates—and if ever a father and father-in-law was spoiled, he was the man—even the fair widow, Mrs. Maynard, clung to him, remembering how her precious baby used to stretch out his little hands and laugh with delight whenever the wandering artist approached him—that all things fell into natural and satisfactory order.

Away in a pretty south coast town, celebrated for the balmy softness of its sea-breeze, vegetates a helpless invalid whose attendants have from time to time to be changed, so wearing is her bitter vicious irritability. She has all the comforts and convenience that can be found. She has books and work—for her lower limbs only are paralyzed—but nothing soothes or softens her. Twice a year a handsome boy spends part of his holidays with her, and is loaded with presents and luxuries, but nothing makes him tender or patient with his suffering mother.

Every two or three months a lady and gentleman come to stay at the chief hotel there, and the lady goes daily to see the querulous invalid. The gentleman never crosses the threshold, he waits for his companion on the beach or on the esplanade. When he sees her coming his face brightens and they stroll too and fro talking gently and gravely.

Mr. Acland has become the most silent of men; he has grown